REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 23, 2007. Claims 1-43 were pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 34 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter, and claims 44-47 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-47 are now pending, with claims 1 and 34 being in independent form.

Claims 1-37, 39-41 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,929,978 to Kanamori in view of Rylander (WO 93/20648). Claims 38 and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Kanamori in view of Rylander and in further view of Akira (JP 2001-358938).

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 34 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to an approach for making printing output color approximately coincident among a plurality of color image forming apparatuses.

In an aspect of the present application, a selected color profile is used to convert input color data, in a device-dependent color space of one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, to converted color data, in a device-dependent color space of another of said plurality of image forming apparatuses, each of the input color data and the converted color data corresponding to a same color in a data device-independent color space, wherein color in an image formed by the one image forming apparatus using said device-dependent input color data is visually equal to color of an image formed by the other of said plurality of image forming apparatuses using said converted device-dependent color data. Each of independent claims 1 and 34 addresses these features, as well as additional features.

Kanamori, as understood by applicant, proposes an approach for performing color correction of a digital color copier in order to properly perform conversion of RGB data to CMY data for printing, wherein a set of color patches of respectively different sample colors is printed using a set of CMYK printing data values, the color patches are then scanned and analyzed to obtain RGB color patch input data values by the color copier, and each of all of the possible input color data values that can be produced by the scanner/analyzer section of the color copier is then related to one of the RGB color patch input data values which is closest thereto in a 3-dimensional color space. Each of these possible input color data values is thereby related to an appropriate CMYK color printing value, whereby a color correction table can be generated which provides correction accuracy that is independent of non-linearity of color printing characteristics.

Kanamori, as acknowledged in the Office Action, does not disclose or suggest performing color conversion from data for a first image forming apparatus to data for a second image forming apparatus.

Rylander, as understood by applicant, proposes an approach for color correction to make an output of a second printer approximate an output of a first printer. In order to translate a first set of color data defining a color image corrected for the first printer, into a second set of color data for the second printer, Rylander proposes empirically deriving from each printer, color measurement data (in L*a*b* color space) corresponding to a set of test target patterns (in YMCK color space), storing such color measurement data as mappings of YMCK values to corresponding L*a*b* values, in respective databases for the first and second printers, and then ***applying interpolation techniques to estimate translations for arbitrary inputs***. That is, for a particular YMCK point in the database for the first printer, the corresponding L*a*b* value in

the database for the first printer is used to locate a coarse color match to a point in the database for the second printer that has a closest L*a*b* value, and interpolation is applied to the corresponding YMCK value to arrive at an estimate of a point in the color space of the second printer that is closest to the particular YMCK point in the database for the first printer. Thus, the estimated YMCK value in the color space of the second printer in the system of Rylander is not the same as, but merely an approximation of, the particular YMCK point in the color space of the first printer.

Such approach proposed by Rylander does not disclose or suggest, however, an image processing method wherein a selected color profile is used to convert input color data, in a device-dependent color space of one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, to converted color data, in a device-dependent color space of another of said plurality of image forming apparatuses, ***each of the input color data and the converted color data corresponding to a same color in a data device-independent color space***, wherein color in an image formed by the one image forming apparatus using said device-dependent input color data is ***visually equal*** to color of an image formed by the other of said plurality of image forming apparatuses using said converted device-dependent color data, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application.

Murakawa, as understood by applicant, proposes an approach for processing data to be supplied to a printer in order to obtain a printed image resembling the original image, wherein input data is processed according to data type to generate RGB data, a detector detects a specified pattern in the RGB data, a converter converts the RGB data to CMYK data of print colors in correspondence to the characteristics of the printer device, and the detector detects the specified pattern in the CMYK data.

Murakawa, like Kanamori, does not disclose or suggest performing color conversion from data for a first image forming apparatus to data for a second image forming apparatus.

Further, in the approach proposed by Murakawa, color in the printed image is close to, but not same as, color in the original image.

Applicant simply does not find teaching or suggestion in the cited art, however, of an image processing method wherein a selected color profile is used to convert input color data, in a device-dependent color space of one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, to converted color data, in a device-dependent color space of another of said plurality of image forming apparatuses, ***each of the input color data and the converted color data corresponding to a same color in a data device-independent color space***, wherein color in an image formed by the one image forming apparatus using said device-dependent input color data is ***visually equal*** to color of an image formed by the other of said plurality of image forming apparatuses using said converted device-dependent color data, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application.

Independent claim 34 is patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 34, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.

In view of the remarks hereinabove, applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that are required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our

Dkt. 2271/71533

Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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